

Peter, 2nd Submission!

Submission to the Enquiry into the Rights of the Terminally ill (Euthanasia Laws Repeal Bill 2008)

On the 21st. of February this year my wife (Iris Flounders, aged 85) and I returned to Tullamarine Airport after an eleven day visit to the USA and Mexico.

The sole objective of that painful, long and onerous trip was to obtain a supply of the poisonous drug 'Nembutal', which, most reprehensively and regrettably is not legally available to the general public in this country. It is readily and legally available for veterinary use on animals that are unable to clearly make known their distress.

Paradoxically it is illegal to use it for human sufferers, some of whom have already made up their minds and previously provided written requests to be euthanised upon reaching a certain stage of their illness. They and presumably their medical specialists obviously cannot be trusted to utilise the only suitable and consistently reliable method, which is to take a relatively small dose (100ml.) of a liquid that within seconds produces the final relief from their intolerable and unnecessarily prolonged suffering. A quick and painless death, surely the very basic right of any terminally ill person.

Following the trip made by my wife and I, the details of it were shown nationally by Channel 7 who had filmed and recorded the entire trip. As I have said, my wife is now 85 years of age and I am 78. The main difference is that I have been diagnosed with mesothelioma which constitutes a death sentence whenever it chooses to become activated.

Certain overseas countries have conclusively demonstrated that 'built-in' adequate medical checks and precautions have prevented the provision of Nembutal to any attempting to manipulate the system. Surely, in this sophisticated and advanced country of ours we have the capacity to prevent any abuses to whatever safety system is put in place. (As a last resort there could surely be a posse of Federal Policemen assigned especially for the job? – see below))

Last August I suffered the ill fortune of being diagnosed with mesothelioma. Together with the added imperative of having a good friend and fellow member of 'Exit', who has been suffering increasingly from metastasising breast cancer (now exceeding sixteen years). Two years ago, she developed active bone cancer and thus became totally unable to make a trip overseas - legally or illegally. Given those circumstances my wife I volunteered to go to Tijuana in her place and try to obtain the drug for our friend. She subsidised our not inconsiderable costs that were involved. Shortly after our return home the fact that we had been entirely successful was widely publicised. A week later, seven Federal Police officers arriving unannounced with a search warrant. They were unable to find any illegal drugs on the premises and eventually left with some insignificant items such as a bank statement of mine; my wife's diary; my legally purchased (prior to its being banned by the Attorney-General's department of the previous government) copy of Dr. Nitschke's excellent and explanatory book 'The Peaceful Pill'. The raid and search itself was distressing and upsetting to us considering our ages and my infirmity, but not unexpected when the restrictive and undemocratic actions of the government instrumentalities (particularly of the previous government) are concerned. However, just recently, we were officially informed that the Federal Police did not intend to proceed with a prosecution. That was a great relief to these two elderly renegades who hitherto have been law-abiding citizens. However, there comes a time when actions contrary to the law have to be used to draw attention to misguided and bad laws.

Needless to say, Angie, already frequently wracked with pain from the double diseases she had been enduring for so long posse had the extreme mental distress of

repetitive agonies of the later stages and – at last – the long sought ultimate departure from this world, her own distress was palpable. Another distressing but inevitable aspect of the death of a loved one dying from one of the many incurable varieties of cancer and similarly fatal diseases, was the intense distress of the patient – forced to linger on, enduring the increasingly necessary indignities. *(The underlined words 'forced' and 'necessary' are underlined deliberately because as the very crux of the reason for this enquiry. They are 'forced' to 'endure' these only because of the short-sighted policy adopted by this medically advanced leader of medical science.* The law-makers who were involved in that retrogressive decision should be thoroughly ashamed of themselves and deemed unfit for the important duties to which they had been elected.

It is now well-known that in Tijuana - the Mexican enclave that adjoins San Diego - this drug (Nembutal) is widely available in the many retailers of veterinarian products, with no prescriptions required or any questions asked as to its use. Indeed, there is one main street shop that displays a window banner advising – in English – that supplies are available for Australians. It can therefore be concluded that the source, the requirement and the product itself is very widely known and used by visitors, the majority being from Australia. Judging from the current numbers of these veterinary shops in Tijuana every weekday reveals that bio-chemistry from all those suppliers that Mexican production of it must surely contain more than enough Nembutal to painlessly end the lives of every canine in Mexico!

Which brings me to the main point on which your committee is deliberating. Australia has often lead the world with the introduction of enlightened legislation. You now have the opportunity to take up this particular baton, protect it from those who short-sightedly oppose it and light the flame of hope to many suffering and yet to suffer the effects of one of the worst scourges known to medical science. Please!

Sincerely

FROM: Donald S John Aloysius Flounders.

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

TO: Mr. Peter Hallahan
Secretary. The Standing
Committee on Legal and
and Constitutional Affairs.
P.O.Box 6100 CANBERRA 2600